Message Text

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TAGS: AORG, PORG, UNESCO

SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH ALGERIAN MINISTER TO UNESCO.

1. PERMREP WAS INVITED TO PRIVATE LUNCH BY M. AHMED DERRADJI, ALGERIAN MINISTER TO UNESCO. DERRADJI WAS, AS USUAL, EXTREMELY GRACIOUS AND FRIENDLY. HE INDI-CATED HE HAD JUST RETURNED FROM ALGIERS WHERE HE HAD ATTENDED RECENT TALKS BETWEEN DG M'BOW AND PRESIDENT BOUMEDIENNE. DERRADJI, AS EXPECTED, WAS INTERESTED IN KNOWING MORE OF THE EFFECTS OF RECENT CONGRESSIONAL ACTION AGAINST UNESCO. PERMREP GAVE HIM A COPY OF THE LANGUAGE OF THE ACT WHICH HAD BEEN TRANSLATED INTO FRENCH, AS DERRADJI DOES NOT SPEAK ENGLISH. DERRADJI WAS UNCLEAR AS TO THE EFFECT OF THE LEGISLATION AND SEEMED TO BE SURPRISED TO LEARN THAT IT COULD RESULT IN CUTTING ALL FUNDING TO UNESCO. HE STATED THAT IT WAS A DANGEROUS PRECEDENT AS IT PERMITTED A STATE TO WITH-HOLD FUNDING BECAUSE IT DISAGREED WITH A VOTE. HE SEEMED SURPRISED TO LEARN THAT THE LEGISLATION WOULD AFFECT MORE THAN A YEAR'S PAYMENT. DERRADJI EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER THE FUTURE OF UNESCO AND SAID HE AND HIS GOVERNMENT WANTED TO SEE THE ORGANIZATION SURVIVE. CONFIDENTIAL

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- 2. DERRADJI BRIEFLY INDICATED THE MAJOR POINTS OF DISCUSSION BETWEEN M'BOW AND PRESIDENT BOUMEDIENNE. ALTHOUGH THEY CENTERED MAINLY AROUND RELATIONS BETWEEN ALGERIA AND UNESCO AND VARIOUS UNESCO PROJECTS OF INTE-REST TO ALGERIA, DERRADJI STATED THAT M'BOW AND PRESIDENT BOUMEDIENNE HAD DISCUSSED THE FINANCIAL CONDITION OF UNESCO. DERRADJI SAID THAT M'BOW HAD MEHTIONED THE POSSIBILITY OF ASKING FOR INTEREST FREE LOANS AND HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT OF ALGERIA WOULD FAVORABLY RESPOND TO SUCH A REQUEST. HOWEVER, DERRADJI STATED HIS GOVERNMENT DID NOT WANT TO SEE THE US PULL AWAY FROM THE UNESCO AND HE ARDENTLY HOPED A COMPROMISE COULD BE REACHED WHICH WOULD SATISFY THE US. WE DID NOT GO INTO PARTICULARS OF POSSIBLE ACTIONS BUT DERRADJI WAS TOLD THAT THE REGIONAL ISSUE. WHICH DID NOT DIRECTLY INVOLVE THE ARAB STATES, HAD CAUSED A PARTICULARLY GREAT FLURRY OF RESENTMENT AMONG THE US PUBLIC. THE DISCUSSION ENDED WITH AN AGREEMENT TO HAVE FREQUENT INFORMAL DIS-CUSSIONS.
- 3. COMMENT: DERRADJI WAS PROBABLY ACTING ON INSTRUCTIONS AND HIS INVITATION MAY INDICATE REALIZATION BY THE GOA THAT WHAT APPEARED TO BE A PROPAGANDA VICTORY MAY END UP AS A DEFEAT. THEIR CONCERN SEEMS TO GO BEYOND UNESCO AND CENTER ON WHETHER THIS MAY SET A PRECEDENT AND INDICATE A GENERAL PULLING AWAY OF THE US FROM THE UN SYSTEM. THE STRENGTH OF US REACTION SEEMED TO GENUINELY SURPRISE DERRADJI, ALTHOUGH HE HAD BEEN AMPLY WARNED DURING THE GENERAL CONFERENCE. IT IS DOUBTFUL IF THIS CONCERN WILL BE TRANSFORMED INTO ANY WILLINGNESS TO COMPROMISE ON THE JERUSALEM ISSUE, BUT IT MIGHT SHOW SOME FLEXIBILITY ON THE REGIONAL PROBLEM.

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